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August 19, 2009

Hon. Premier Dalton McGuinty
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto ON
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Sent via fax

Dear Premier:

I'm writing to you today on behalf of CUPE Ontario's 200,000 members to express our collective support for those who are courageously protecting Site 41 from being transformed into a toxic waste dump. Premier, your legislative responsibility is to protect Ontario and Ontarians: and instead of living up to this responsibility, you are allowing the destruction of one of the earth's purest reservoirs of water. Members of the community in and around Tiny Township, their children and their neighbours across Simcoe County, elders from Native communities in the area and non-governmental advocacy groups such as the Council of Canadians are desperately trying to protect the Alliston Aquifer. Water from the aquifer is an essential natural resource that communities and farms across this region of Ontario have been depending upon for generations. CUPE Ontario calls on you and your government to heed the call of your constituents and take all appropriate steps to stop the development of Site 41 as a dump site.

Like all of the concerned citizens who are involved with the on-going protests in and around Site 41, CUPE Ontario believes that water is a precious and public resource that needs to be protected – through legislation, if necessary. Deciding to dump thousands of tonnes of waste on top of one of the world's remaining sources of pure water is immoral and unethical. Further, CUPE Ontario calls on you to condemn the arrests of concerned citizens in an attempt to stifle peaceful dissent. Arresting senior citizens who wish to protect the Alliston Aquifer is not the way forward here. Arrange for the one-year moratorium on this project that has been called for by community members and City and Town Councils in the area and allow for comprehensive consultation and environmental impact assessments. This is the only reasonable way to proceed.

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Patrick (Sid) Ryan
President

ONE STRONG VOICE

Fred Hahn
Secretary-Treasurer

CUPE Ontario is calling upon you to publicly support the moratorium before the scheduled meeting of Simcoe County Council on August 25. Council members at this meeting have the power to approve this moratorium and will no doubt be influenced by your courage in taking up a fight that the local citizenry is also supporting.

More broadly, you and your party should see this as an educational opportunity. The way to arrive at a "zero-waste" future – one that you have publicly advocated before – is not to keep building new dump sites and incinerators. It is to encourage local communities to divert as much of their solid waste as possible. We will achieve a zero-waste future only when we maximize the opportunities for reducing waste production, for re-using materials and for recycling what we cannot reduce or re-use. The widespread opposition to turning Site 41 into a waste dump that will inevitably leak toxic waste into the pristine waters of the Alliston Aquifer is a golden opportunity for the Government of Ontario to invest in a public education program that reaches out to already engaged citizens.

CUPE Ontario looks forward to your immediate and public response on the issue of Site 41.

Yours truly,



Patrick (Sid) Ryan
President